

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A process for the manufacturing of a ~~decorative surface element~~ building panel, the building panel comprising a core, a decorative upper surface, a lower surface, and edges joining the upper and lower surfaces, the edges being at least one of a tongue-and-a groove, the upper ~~which surface element~~ comprises a base layer and a decorative upper surface, the process comprising,

i) providing the decorative upper surface with a decor layer, the decor layer comprising a pattern;

ii) printing a wetting repellant lacquer in a predetermined pattern on the decorative upper surface, at least partially matching the pattern on the decor layer, the wetting repellant covering only part of the decorative upper surface, thereafter

iii) applying a wear layer of a UV or electron beam curing lacquer on top of the decorative upper surface, which UV or electron beam curing lacquer is repelled from the part of the surface being covered by the wetting repellant lacquer whereby a surface feature is achieved;

iv) sprinkling abrasion resistant hard particles, the particles being at least one selected from the group consisting of α -aluminum oxide, silicone carbide, silicon oxide and diamond, on the surface element;

v) curing the wear layer; and

vi) removing a portion of the ~~hard~~ particles by applying a high pressure air stream, thereby providing the building panel.

2. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein said UV or electron beam curing lacquer consists of one selected from the group consisting of an acrylic, epoxy and a maleimide lacquer.

3. (Previously Prested) A process according to claim 1, wherein the applying step comprises multiple applications of the wear layer with intermediate partial curing between each of the multiple applications.
4. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein the particles have a hardness greater than the hardness of the cured wear layer and an average particle size in the range of 50 nm - 150 μ m.
5. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 4, wherein the ~~hard~~ particles comprise scratch resistant particles ~~at least one~~ selected from the group consisting of diamond, silicon oxide, α -aluminum oxide, ~~and~~ silicon carbide and mixtures thereof.
6. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 4, wherein a first amount of the ~~hard~~ particles consist of one selected from the group consisting of silicon oxide, α -aluminum oxide and silicon carbide, while a smaller amount of the ~~hard~~ particles consist of diamond.
7. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 6, wherein the ~~hard~~ particles consist of diamond, having an average particle size in the range of 50 nm - 2 μ m, and are placed close to the upper surface of the wear layer, such that the ~~hard~~ particles provide the wear layer with abrasion resistance.
8. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein the wetting repellant lacquer comprises a UV or electron beam curing lacquer and a silicone polymer.
9. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 8, wherein the wetting repellant lacquer comprises UV or electron beam curing acrylic, epoxy or a maleimide lacquer.
10. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 8, wherein the wetting repellent lacquer is translucent.

11. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 8, wherein the wetting repellent lacquer is translucent in at least one part and transparent or opaque in at least one other part.

12. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 11, wherein the wetting repellent lacquer comprises a matting agent, whereby the matting agent creates a structure enhancing shadow effect.

13. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 11, wherein the wetting repellent lacquer includes a matting agent, whereby the matting agent creates a structure enhancing effect.

14. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 8, wherein the wetting repellent lacquer is cured before the step where the wear layer is applied.

15. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein the decor layer is produced from a digitally stored original, that the digitally stored original is processed in order to achieve a digital structure original whereby a surface structure that matches the decor is achieved through one or more processes selected from the group consisting of printing, embossing, molding, and rolling of at least a portion of the digital structure original.

16. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 8, wherein the printing comprises applying the wetting repellent lacquer by means of an ink-jet printer.

17. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein the base layer consists of a particle board or a fibre board.

18. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein the base layer comprises a polymer.

19. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein, the decor layer is formed by a process comprising processing a digitally stored image.

20. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 19, wherein the digitally stored image resembles a structure selected from the group consisting of wood and minerals.

21. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 19, wherein the processing comprises editing the digitally stored image by at least one selected from the group consisting of digitizing a number of wood grains, scanning a desired pattern, changing color tones, adjusting contrast, dividing the image into smaller images and adding other decorative elements.

22. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 19, wherein the digitally stored image comprises dark sections and light sections and the printing comprises depositing the wetting repellent lacquer on the dark sections.

23. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein the decor layer comprises a wood pattern, comprising one or more selected from the group consisting of knots, cracks, flaws and grains.

24. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 23, wherein said printing comprises applying the wetting repellent lacquer in a configuration identical to the pattern in the decor layer.

25. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 3, wherein said printing comprises applying the wetting repellent lacquer in a configuration to enhance the pattern.

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28. (Currently Amended) A process for process for the manufacturing of a building panel, the building panel comprising a core, a decorative upper surface, a lower surface, and edges joining the upper and lower surfaces, the edges being provided with at least one of a tongue and a groove, the process ~~decorative surface element~~ comprising:

applying a primer to a panel to form a primed panel;
providing a decor layer on the primer, the decor layer comprising a pattern;
printing wetting repellant lacquer on parts of the primed panel, matching the decor layer;
placing a layer of UV or electron curing lacquer on the wetting repellent lacquer, whereby the UV or electron beam curing lacquer is repelled from the parts of the primed panel where the wetting repellant lacquer has been printed; and

sprinkling abrasion resistant ~~hard~~ particles on the surface element, the particles being at least one selected from the group consisting of α -aluminum oxide, silicone carbide, silicon oxide and diamond;

curing the UV or electron curing lacquer; and
removing a portion of the hard particles by applying a high pressure air stream.

29. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 1, further comprising repeating each of steps iii through vi, at least one time, in sequence, to achieve a plurality of cured layers comprising the abrasion resistant ~~hard~~ particles.

30. (Previously Presented) A process for process for the manufacturing of a building panel, the building panel comprising a core, a decorative upper surface, a lower surface, and edges joining the upper and lower surfaces, the edges being provided with at least one of a tongue and a groove, the process ~~decorative surface element~~ comprising process for the manufacturing of a decorative surface element, which element comprises a base layer and a decorative upper surface, the process comprising,

- i) selecting a digitized design at a first location;
- ii) transmitting the digitized design to a second location, remote from the first location;

- iii) providing the decorative upper surface with a decor layer, the decor layer comprising a pattern, the pattern being derived from the digitized design;
- iv) printing a wetting repellant lacquer in a predetermined pattern on the decorative ~~upper~~ surface, at least partially matching the pattern on the decor layer, the wetting repellant covering only part of the decorative ~~upper~~ surface, and thereafter
- v) applying a wear layer of a UV or electron beam curing lacquer on top of the ~~decorative~~ upper surface, which UV or electron beam curing lacquer is repelled from the part of the surface being covered by the wetting repellant lacquer whereby a surface feature is achieved.

31. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 30, wherein the transmitting comprises sending the digitized design via a computer network.

32. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 31, wherein the computer network is the Internet.

33. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 30, wherein the digitized design is selected from a database of selectable designs.

34. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 30, further comprising digitizing an image to achieve the design.

35. (Currently Amended) A process for the manufacturing of decorative surface, the surface being formed from a plurality of building panels, the building panels together forming a decorative surface, each building panel comprising an upper surface having a surface area, a lower surface, and edges joining the upper and lower surfaces, the edges being provided with at least one of a tongue and a groove, which surface comprises a plurality of surface elements, each surface element comprising a base layer and a decorative upper surface having a surface area; the process comprising,

- i) selecting a design at a first location, wherein the design has a size larger than the surface area of each surface element;
- ii) dividing the design into a plurality of segments, each segment having a surface area corresponding to the surface area of one of the upper surfaces ~~surface elements~~;
- iii) providing the ~~decorative~~ upper surfaces with decor layers, the decor layers each comprising one segment of the design, such that when the building panels ~~surface elements~~ are installed, the design is reproduced across the plurality of building panels ~~surface elements~~.

36. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 35, further comprising;

- iv) printing a wetting repellant lacquer in a predetermined pattern on the ~~decorative~~ upper surfaces, at least partially matching the segments on the decor layers, the wetting repellant covering only part of the ~~decorative~~ upper surface, and thereafter
- v) applying a wear layer of a UV or electron beam curing lacquer on top of the ~~decorative~~ upper surfaces, which UV or electron beam curing lacquer is repelled from the part of the surface being covered by the wetting repellant lacquer whereby a surface feature is achieved.

37. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 35, further comprising:

- iv) providing each building panel ~~surface element~~ with at least one of a matching line and a unique identification to assist in installation.

38. (Previously Presented) A process for the manufacturing of a decorative surface ~~element~~, the decorative surface being formed from a plurality of building panels, each building panel comprising an upper surface having a surface area, a lower surface, and edges joining the upper and lower surfaces, the edges being provided with at least one of a tongue and a groove, which surface comprises a plurality of surface elements, each surface element comprising a base layer and a decorative upper surface having a surface area, the process comprising,

- i) selecting a digitized design at a first location;
- ii) transmitting the digitized design via the Internet to a second location; and

iii) providing the ~~decorative~~ upper surfaces ~~surface~~ with a decor layer, the decor layer comprising a pattern, the pattern being derived from the digitized design.

39. (New) The process of claim 28, further comprising sprinkling scratch resistant particles on the building panels, the particles being at least one selected from the group consisting of α -aluminum oxide, silicone carbide, silicon oxide and diamond.

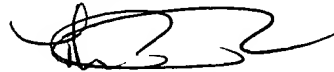
to recite building panels, comprising “an upper surface having a surface area, a lower surface, and edges joining the upper and lower surfaces, the edges being provided with at least one of a tongue and a groove”. Thus, because the cited references do neither teach nor suggest “a building panel comprising an upper surface having a surface area, a lower surface, and edges joining the upper and lower surfaces, the edges being provided with at least one of a tongue and a groove”, Applicants respectfully present that the cited references do not establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Although Applicants previously argued that the general concept of dividing an image to a number of smaller pieces, such that the larger image can be reproduced, the cited references do not provide any motivation to apply such a procedure to building elements. In any event, Applicants respectfully present that the presently claimed methods differ from the methods used to create jigsaw puzzles. Specifically, in order to make a jigsaw puzzle, a large image is reproduced on a surface, whereafter, the surface is divided into smaller segments which fit together to reproduce the image. In contrast, according to the present claims, the image is first divided into a number of smaller segments and then the smaller segments are applied to the various surface elements as a decor layer. Thus, while jigsaw puzzles require completion of the image before being “disassembled”, according to the present claims, the complete image is not first assembled, only to be disassembled thereafter.

IV. Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that all objections and/or rejections are overcome by the above amendment and remarks. Thus, entry of the amendments and passage of the application to allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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